UNITED
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Secretariat

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29 October 1992

SECRETARY-GENERAL'S BULLETIN

To: Members of the staff

Subject: PROMOTION OF EQUAL TREATMENT OF MEN AND WOMEN IN THE SECRETARIAT AND PREVENTION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT*

1. The Charter of the United Nations sets high standards for the Organization and promotes the observance of those standards throughout the world. Article 8 of the Charter is designed to prevent any form of discrimination based on gender within the Organization. Specifically, that Article states:

> "The United Nations shall place no restrictions on the eligibility of men and women to participate in any capacity and under conditions of equality in its principal and subsidiary organs."

Article 101, paragraph 3, requires the highest standards of integrity from staff members. The Organization thus has the duty to ensure that its staff is treated, and treats one another, with respect, dignity and due regard for personal privacy. Any form of harassment, particularly sexual harassment, at the workplace or in connection with work is contrary to these provisions of the Charter and, consequently, to the policy of the Organization; it is a violation of the standards of conduct expected of every international civil servant and may lead to disciplinary action.

2. In 1979, guidelines for promoting equal treatment of men and women in the Secretariat were issued, then reissued as information circular ST/IC/79/17/Rev.1 of 8 March 1982. Those guidelines have now been updated and strengthened. They are reissued as information circular ST/IC/1992/67 of 29 October 1992.

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* Personnel Manual index No. 1165.

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3. To address the problem of sexual harassment, which constitutes unacceptable behaviour for staff working in the United Nations, administrative instruction ST/AI/379 of 29 October 1992 defines sexual harassment and establishes informal and formal procedures for dealing with incidents of sexual harassment.

4. It is my firm belief that, through the strict observance of the principles, policies and procedures set out in those administrative documents, staff members will avoid actions or words which would prevent the full participation of any of their colleagues in the work of the Organization under conditions of equality and respect for everyone and will promote a harmonious working environment.

Boutros BOUTROS-GHALI
Secretary-General